

CONFIDENTIAL

3 November 1962

MEMORANDUM

Subj: Boarding of Russian merchant ship EMELIAN PAGACHEV  
at the Pacific entrance to the Panama Canal on 3  
November 1962

1. In addition to the regular boarding party which is provided by Panama Canal authorities, the Commandant of the Fifteenth Naval District detailed a boarding officer (Commander Robert L. TULLY, USN) to visit the subject ship. The mission of the boarding officer was to furnish naval representation, and to provide added insurance that the ship was not carrying contraband to Cuba. This was the first Soviet ship to transit the Canal since the blockade of Cuba was imposed.
2. The boarding party (doctor, admeasurers, customs officer, internal security officer, naval boarding officer, and officer in charge of the transit guard) departed in a Panama Canal launch at 0600R and arrived at the EMELIAN PAGACHEV at 0640R. The security inspection was completed at about 0815R. At the end of the inspection the ship was cleared for transit. This clearance was given by the Panama Canal Company internal security officer and was based on the reports of Panama Canal inspectors and the concurrence of the Navy boarding officer. Since there was no Panama Canal launch available, the boarding party rode the ship in and disembarked at 0900R in the vicinity of the Thatcher Ferry Bridge in a boat that had brought out the transit security guard to board the ship.
3. Immediately upon arrival, the boarding party was escorted to the captain's cabin. The following general observations were made: The EMELIAN PUGACHEV is an ex-U.S. Liberty Ship, built in Portland, Oregon in 1943. She presented an exceptionally good appearance from a maintenance standpoint, and was very clean. She had a good coat of paint, some of which had been recently applied. The writer went all over the ship in whites, and left as clean as he had come aboard. There had been some habitability improvements in the superstructure area, and it is presumed that some electronic improvements had been made. Otherwise, the ship appeared to have the standard "Liberty" configuration. There was a full deck cargo of lumber both forward and aft. Thus, it was impossible to inspect major cargo hatches. The manifest showed a cargo of lumber, fish oil, and canned fish. The inspection provided

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no evidence of contraband. However, it must be conceded that a ship with a full deck cargo could conceal contraband that would not be subject to detection without major off-loading. The ship rode well up in the water, drawing about 22 feet forward. This is attributed to her having been underway for thirty days since sailing from Nakhodka (near Vladivostok).

4. All personnel were cooperative and circumspect in their conduct. The captain provided all documents requested, and answered all questions that were asked. He stated it was his first transit of the Canal. When asked if he would make a return transit, he said he didn't know. He stated that upon departure from Havana he might go to the Baltic or the Black Sea. This led to the conjecture that he might take some missile components out of Cuba. When he was told that he was cleared for transit, he seemed pleased that the clearance was expeditiously granted. He offered no objection to the embarking of a transit guard; and he readily produced three small arms to be locked in his cabin. He stated they were for sporting purposes. He offered no hospitality; but the first mate offered breakfast which was politely declined. None of the Russians admitted to speaking English. It is suspected that they understood more than they would have you believe. There was very little difficulty in communicating, even though no interpreter was provided. The captain expressed thanks for the morning paper (in English) which he scanned. He paused over an article about Mikoyan's visit to Cuba which was pointed out to him.

5. All Russian personnel, including the captain, wore civilian clothes. It was noted that most of the ratings wore no socks. There were at least a half dozen women in the crew estimated to consist of about 50 personnel. The women were the only people observed actually working when the boarding party first arrived. This was probably due to the early hour. They were scrubbing decks, working in galleys, etc. Most of the men just sat around on deck until the ship commenced making preparations for getting underway. Throughout the ship pictures of Lenin and Kruchev were much in evidence with Lenin predominating. This was especially true in living and messing spaces and in recreation rooms.

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6. The boarding was considered routine in all respects.  
No incidents.

*Robert L. Tully,*

**ROBERT L. TULLY  
CDR., USN**

12/hka  
6 NOV 1962

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**MEMORANDUM**

To: Commandant, FIFTEENTH Naval District  
Via: (1) District Operations Officer  
(2) District Shipping Security Officer

From: LT H. A. WELTNER, USNR

Subj: Report of Transit; submission of

Ref: (a) 15ND Instruction 5510.3 of 25 Oct 1962

Email: (1) U.S. Marine Corps Guard Assignments dtd 3 Nov 1962

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following transit report is submitted:

a. Ship: EMELIAN PUGACHEV (Russian)

Master: Captain Shvedunov

Pilot: Captain H. Buehler

Size of crew: 13 officers, 31 crewmen

Cargo: Lumber, canned fish and fish oil

Last Port: Nakhodka, Russia

Next Port: Havana, Cuba

b. The Officer in Charge, Ship Security Guard, boarded about 0635R. The Navy Shiphandling Assistants and the Transit Guard boarded at 0855R. The entire Ship Security Guard debarked at 1800R.

c. Chronology of ship transit:

0810 - Commenced transit  
0949 - Entered Miraflores Locks  
1040 - Departed Miraflores Locks  
1059 - Entered Pedro Miguel Locks  
1127 - Departed Pedro Miguel Locks  
1440 - Anchored in Gatun Lake

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1545 - Underway for Gatun Locks  
1607 - Arrived Gatun Locks  
1730 - Departed Gatun Locks  
1800 - Completed transit  
1830 (About) - Departed Canal Zone waters

d. The Transit Guard Posts were as indicated in enclosure (1). The Navy Shiphandling Assistants Posts were:

<b>Bridge</b>	<b>Engine Room</b>
0900 - 1000: T. E. JENKINS, SN	J. J. SCHLECHTA, EM2
1000 - 1100: R. L. MATHELY, BM2	D. E. KNUPP, FN
1100 - 1200: T. E. JENKINS, SN	J. J. SCHLECHTA, EM2
1200 - 1300: R. L. MATHELY, BM2	D. E. KNUPP, FN
1300 - 1400: T. E. JENKINS, SN	J. J. SCHLECHTA, EM2
1400 - 1500: R. L. MATHELY, BM2	D. E. KNUPP, FN
1500 - 1600: T. E. JENKINS, SN	J. J. SCHLECHTA, EM2
1600 - 1700: R. L. MATHELY, BM2	D. E. KNUPP, FN
1700 - 1800: T. E. JENKINS, SN	J. J. SCHLECHTA, EM2

While approaching the Locks and in the Locks, the Engineer not on watch in the Engine Room was on watch in the Steering Engine Room.

e. About 1230R in the vicinity of Gamboa, the PUGACHEV passed the south bound Brazilian Tanker PRESIDENT DUTRA. Both ships cheered loudly to the other. There were no incidents. The Ship Security Guard returned to Rodman and was dismissed at 2000R.

Very respectfully,

H. A. WELTNER